



ST. THOMAS

RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

REPORT

OF

MEDICAL OFFICER

OF

HEALTH

1946

EXETER:

*Printed by H, Punchard & Son, St. Thomas,
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ANNUAL REPORT

FOR

1946

**To the Chairman and Members of the
St. Thomas Rural District Council.**

The report of the Medical Officer of Health continues on the instructions of the Ministry to be drawn up in an abbreviated form. Records however are being preserved so that a comprehensive report may be issued when required. The Medical Officer of Health returned from War Service in August and took over his duties from Dr. Thomas Brown who had carried on so capably during his absence.

VITAL STATISTICS.

The total number of live births was 471 of which 248 were males and 223 females. This gives a birth rate of 16.3.

The number of deaths registered was 337 which gives a death rate of 11.7.

15 Infants died under one year of age so that the Infantile Mortality rate was one of 31.8.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

Measles	..	..	..	..	89
Whooping Cough	..	..	..	..	54
Dysentery	..	..	..	..	6
Chicken Pox	..	..	..	..	2
Pneumonia	..	..	..	..	35
Tuberculosis	..	..	..	..	23
Erysipelas	..	..	..	..	9
Scarlet Fever	..	..	..	..	29
Malaria	..	..	..	..	1
Infective Hepatitis	..	..	..	..	1
Cerebra Spinal Meningitis	..	..	..	..	2
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	..	..	..	..	2
Puerperial Pyrexia	...	..	..	..	2
					—
Total	..	..	..	..	255
					—

As will be seen from the figures there was little infectious disease notified during the year and no epidemic of the major infections. Small outbreaks of Measles and Whooping Cough occurred in some villages. The number notified is of course less than the number which occurred as in some cases parents of children do not seek medical assistance for these common diseases of childhood.

Scarlet Fever was sporadic in character except for a small crop of cases which occurred in an Institution and a few which followed on familial contact. It was very mild in character and cases were nursed at home when facilities were available and adequate isolation was possible.

The two cases of Cerebro Spinal Fever occurred in Institutions and were sporadic in character.

No cases of the Enteric group were notified during the year and there were no cases of Diphtheria. One death was recorded from Whooping Cough.

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION.

This was carried out largely by the private practitioners in the district who were supplied with the necessary material and paid an agreed fee by the Council on receipt of the appropriate record cards. In addition Assistant County Medical Officers of Health immunise children at the Welfare Centres at Topsham, Alphington, and Whimple. The service is free to the Public and the Council recover the cost of the immunisation of children under five from the County Council which is the Welfare Authority.

In October a special drive was undertaken with the co-operation of Medical Practitioners, Nurses, and Health Visitors in the District.

Number of Children Immunised during 1946.

Under 5 years.	Over 5 and under 15 years.
307.	55.
Total 362.	

HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA.

The following services are conducted by the County Medical Officer.

School Health Inspections.
Maternity and Child Welfare.
Tuberculosis.
Venereal Disease.

The school and school children are regularly visited by the Assistant County Medical Officers and the Health Visitors and Nursing Assistants ensure that the standard of personal cleanliness is satisfactory.

Clinics for Tuberculosis are held at the County Offices in Exeter and treatment for Venereal Diseases is available at the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital.

Maternity and Child Welfare Clinics are held at Topsham, Alphington, Broadclyst, and Whimble.

HOUSING.

The position still continues to be desperate and people still continue to live in overcrowded conditions for which there is little hope of relief in the near future. Some progress was however made and at the year's end 8 houses had been completed by the Council and 38 more were in the course of construction.

WATER SUPPLIES, DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

The position is largely as reported in the Medical Officer's Report for the year 1944 except that the village of Ide has been provided with a main by the Exeter City Council which is the Statutory authority. Also further extensions were made to the main at Woodbury.

The following table shows the number of houses in the district, the number of houses connected to public supplies, and the number served from standpipes :

WATER SUPPLIES IN THE ST. THOMAS RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA.

<i>Parish.</i>				<i>Total No. of dwelling houses.</i>	<i>No. of Houses connected.</i>	<i>No. of Houses served by Stand- pipes</i>
Alphington	..	..	..	316	230	12
Ashcombe	..	..	..	35	Nil.	0
Ashton	..	..	..	54	—	25
Aylesbeare	..	..	..	81	—	0
Bicton	..	..	..	23	—	0
Brampford Speke	..	..	..	93	—	0
Bridford	..	..	..	132	32	8
Broadclyst	..	..	..	575	129	4
Christow	..	..	..	159	24	26
Clysthydon	..	..	..	67	—	0
Clyst. St. George	..	..	..	63	—	0
Clyst St. Lawrence	..	..	..	25	—	0
Clyst St. Mary	..	..	..	40	—	0
Colaton Raleigh	..	..	..	150	—	30
Doddiscombsleigh	..	..	..	50	—	0
Dunchideock	..	..	..	38	—	0
Dunsford	..	..	..	164	—	28
East Budleigh	..	..	..	234	139	30
Exminster	..	..	..	359	—	0
Farringdon	..	..	..	54	—	0
Harpford	..	..	..	274	226	5
Holcombe Burnell	..	..	..	48	—	0
Honiton Clyst	..	..	..	69	—	0
Huxham	..	..	..	26	—	0
Ide	..	..	..	171	30	35
Kenn	..	..	..	239	—	0
Kenton	..	..	..	344	178	10
Lympstone	..	..	..	392	355	4
Mamhead	..	..	..	32	—	0
Netherexe	..	..	..	16	—	0
Otterton	..	..	..	194	81	29
Pinhoe	..	..	..	559	530	0
Poltimore	..	..	..	71	28	0
Powderham	..	..	..	43	—	0
Rewe	..	..	..	73	—	0
Rockbeare	..	..	..	129	—	0
Shillingford	..	..	..	21	—	0
Sowton	..	..	..	103	—	0

<i>Parish.</i>	<i>Total No. of dwelling-houses.</i>	<i>No. of houses connected.</i>	<i>No. of Houses served by Stand-pipes.</i>
Stoke Canon	90	—	0
Tedburn St. Mary	147	—	0
Topsham	961	909	5
Upton Pyne	116	—	0
Whimble	231	—	0
White stone	142	—	0
Woodbury	527	60	21
	7730	2951	272

Bacteriological examinations were made of the water going into the supply of the public supplies and samples were also taken of many of the wells in the district. In all, 119 samples were taken of which 42 were found to be unsatisfactory. These were mainly well supplies and the owners were advised to boil all water used for drinking purposes. Some unsatisfactory samples were also collected from the public supplies at Topsham and Lymptone but these eventually gave good results on adjustment of the chlorinating apparatus. The supply at Otterton which came from the catchment area also gave unsatisfactory results due to the inadequacy of the chlorinating apparatus and the matter was referred to the Consulting Engineers, but at the end of the year the position continued to be unsatisfactory. Samples taken at Broadclyst, Woodbury, Pinhoe, Poltimore, Bridford, East Budleigh and Harpford, showed satisfactory results. The samples taken at Starcross were also satisfactory bacteriologically but still showed a marked plumbo-solvent action as the following results show :

Bacteriological Examination of Water (Samples 16.9.46).

W.840. Public Drinking fountain, Starcross. Springs A.

Probable number coli-aerogenes per 100 ml.—Nil.

This sample is satisfactory bacteriologically.

pH value — 5.8.

Lead present. Approximately 1/50th grain per gallon.

Lead present after 24 hours small scale laboratory tests, approximately 1/3rd. grain per gallon.

pH value after 24 hours small scale laboratory tests—6.1.

W.841. Tap at Staplake. Starcross. Springs A.

Probable number coli-aerogenes organisms per 100 ml.—Nil.

This sample is satisfactory bacteriologically.

Lead—absent.

pH—5.8.

Lead present after 24 hours' small scale laboratory test, approximately 1/3rd. grain per gallon.

pH value after 24 hours' small scale laboratory test—6.1.

W.842. Tap at Council Houses. Starcross. Springs A.

Probable number coli-aerogenes organisms per 100ml.—Nil.

pH value—5.8.

Lead—absent.

Lead present after 24 hours' small scale laboratory test, approximately 1/3rd. grain per gallon.

pH value after 24 hours small scale laboratory test—6.1.

W.843. Tap at Grove Cottage. Starcross Springs A.

Probable number coli-aerogenes organisms per 100 ml.—2.

pH—5.8.

Lead present. Approximately 1/70th grain per gallon.

Lead present after 24 hours small scale laboratory tests. approximately 1/3rd grain per gallon.

pH value after 24 hours small scale laboratory tests—6.1.

Each of the sample submitted has a marked solvent action on lead.

B. MOORE,
A/County Bacteriologist.

The matter was again referred to the Consulting Engineers to evolve a system that would raise the pH value of this supply.

The Consulting Engineers were also commissioned during the latter part of the year to prepare a scheme for a comprehensive water supply to the district as a whole and also to prepare sewerage schemes for the various villages in the area. These are public sewers in parts of 26 parishes.

SANITARY INSPECTION.

The following summary shows the work done during the year 1946 :—

DRAINAGE.	<i>No.</i>
No. of private drains connected with Sewers	8
No. of drains repaired	32
No. of New Drains	29
No. of Slop Drains	5
No. of New Sewers	1

FOOD.

No. of Seizures or Surrenders of Unsound Meat, Fish, etc. ..	11g
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HOUSES.

No. of New Houses erected	46
No. of Old Houses satisfactorily renovated	81
No. of Houses repaired and limewashed	18
No. of Premises inspected under the Public Health Act and Housing Act	602

DISINFECTIONS.

No. of Lots of Bedding and Clothing disinfected (On recom- mendation of M.O.H. disinfections generally discon- tinued 1944)	10
No. of Houses disinfected	7
No. of Schools disinfected	1

OFFENSIVE TRADES.

No. of offensive Trades	1
No. of offensive Trades improperly conducted	—

CLOSETS.

No. of conversions into Water Closets	—
No. of cases insufficient Closet Accommodation	7
No. of cases remedied	6

RAILWAY STATIONS.

No. of visits	31
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SCAVENGING.

No. of Refuse Heaps discovered injurious to health	8
No. of Refuse Heaps remedied	8

BAKEHOUSES.

No. of Bakehouses	..	..	..	..	..	..	45
No. of visits to Bakehouses	..	..	..	..	..	..	52
No. found defective	..	..	..	..	..	..	2

DAIRIES AND COWSHEDS.

No. of Dairies and Cowsheds	..	..	..	..	..	704
No. of visits to Dairies and Cowsheds	..	..	..	..	..	658
No. of improvements to Dairies and Cowsheds				..	..	110

WATER SAMPLES.

No. of samples of water taken for analysis	..	..	..	119
No. found doubtful	..	..	..	42
No. of Old Wells cleaned out and repaired	..	..	..	33
No. of New Houses certified for occupation with adequate water supply	..	..	..	5
No. of New Wells sunk	..	..	..	23
No. of villages with public supply	..	..	..	15
No. of villages without water mains	..	..	..	30
No. of complaints as to water supply	..	..	..	18

MILK SAMPLES.

No. of samples taken	..	..	..	..	..	150
No. of samples passed	..	..	..	..	..	114
No. of samples failed	..	..	..	..	..	36
No. of designated producers	..	..	..	..	..	159

NUISANCES.

No. of Complaints	..	..	..	..	..	19
No. of Notices issued for abatement of Nuisances	..	..				83
No. of Nuisances abated	..	..	..	..	..	72
No. of Complaints of Pigstyes	..	..	..	..	..	1
No. of Animals removed	..	..	..	..	..	—

W. J. DOYLE,

M.B., B.Ch., B.A.O., L.M.,
D.P.H., B.Sc. (Pub. Health).

July, 1947.

